Demand Change

Everyday Actions

1. In order to intervene early in abuse, parents should educate their children about appropriate sexual behavior and what constitutes unwanted or uncomfortable physical contact. Parents should create a safety plan for their children and ensure that lines of communication about these issues remain open. For a recommendation, visit http://www.familyctr.org/SA/SafetyPlan.pdf.

2. Challenge media that sexualize children. Write to magazines and companies that use sexualized images of children to sell their products and boycott them until they change their advertising practices.

3. Child sexual abuse does not go away by ignoring it. It needs to be reported to your local child protection agency. Call the hotline if you suspect a child is being abused or have questions about reporting abuse. National Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-25-ABUSE (1-800-252-2873.)

Raising Awareness

4. One of the reasons child sexual abuse continues to be a significant issue is because it remains hidden. Help raise awareness by setting up a movie screening with your friends or choosing a book about the issue for your book club. Both the book and film versions of Bastard Out of Carolina by Dorothy Allison are a good place to start.

Volunteer

5. If you are a college student, make sure that this issue is addressed on your campus by student groups and within your classes. If the issue is not being addressed, meet with teachers and groups to strategize ways to incorporate the information into existing classes. If no student groups are interested in working on this issue, start your own. Learn more about CAASE’s college chapters at www.caase.org/community-engagement.

6. Donate your time or financial resources to an agency involved with ending child sexual abuse such as Chicago Children’s Advocacy Center, www.chicagocac.org; or Prevent Child Abuse Illinois, www.preventchildabuseillinois.org.

7. Become a mentor to a child who has been sexually abused. Contact a local mentoring agency or organization in your area.

8. Make sure your child’s school has a protocol for reporting sexual abuse. Ensure that teachers have proper training available to them to identify and deal with sexual abuse in children. Make sure that safety plans are in place in case a child is at risk or has experienced abuse.

9. Lobby your local hospitals and health clinics to train nurses and physicians to treat child victims of sexual abuse. Learn more about the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) trainings available to medical personnel and work to ensure that at least one SANE trained individual is on staff at medical facilities in your communities: www.sane-sart.com.

Keep Learning

10. Find more information by viewing the resources under the Child Sexual Abuse section in the index.